



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Testimony HB 6320 AAC Inclusion of Humane Ed

Good Morning Rep. Fleischmann and Sen. Stillman. I am Rep Diana Urban of the 43rd district and I am here to testify on HB 6320 AAC Inclusion of Humane Education in the Public School Curriculum.

As many of you are aware I have long been championing the addition of Humane Education to our school curriculum. For the record, I would characterize Humane Ed's underlying goal as teaching respect for each other, the animals we share this planet with, and the planet itself. There is ample data to indicate that schools that offer Humane Education have a measurable decrease in disciplinary incidents as well as absenteeism.

Along with the work the Legislature has been doing on the bullying issue, the addition of this enabling legislation for humane education would contribute to the goal of mutual respect and consideration.

We are aware through the RBA process and work done by the Early Childhood Cabinet that there are a significant number of disciplinary incidences in Connecticut schools beginning in Kindergarten.

In fact, in the 2005-2006 school year, 43,936 kindergartners were enrolled in Connecticut's public schools and SDE data on disciplinary offenses reveal 1,032 instances of inappropriate behavior by kindergarten students during this time.

Humane Education builds on the natural affinity that children have for animals and uses it to teach lessons on empathy and humanity. When young children are asked to name the most important people in their lives over 70% refer to a pet. The American Humane Society has documented this link in a pamphlet devoted to the link between animals and children.

If we were able to begin this journey of humane education in kindergarten it could act as a preventative measure for future bullying behavior.

I urge a favorable vote on this bill.

Thank you.